NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
TOURISM FACT SHEET

Northwest Territories Industry, Tourism and Investment

OVERVIEW

Welcome to the Northwest Territories, a land as vast as it is diverse and beautiful. From scenic waterfalls to alluring mountains, the Northwest Territories has unique and awe-inspiring landscapes. This territory has much to offer including a front row seat to the greatest lightshow on Earth: the Aurora Borealis.

NWT Quick Facts

- Capital city: Yellowknife
- Territorial Population: 42,810
- Total Area: 1,170,000 square km
- Official Languages: 11 official languages, 9 of which are Aboriginal languages
- Number of Communities: 33
- Number of Territorial Parks: 33
- Number of National Parks: 5
- Largest Lake: Great Bear Lake
- Tourism contributes approximately $100 million annually into the NWT economy
- The Government of the Northwest Territories' (GNWT) Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI) provides ongoing support for Northwest Territories Tourism (NWTT), the destination marketing organization.

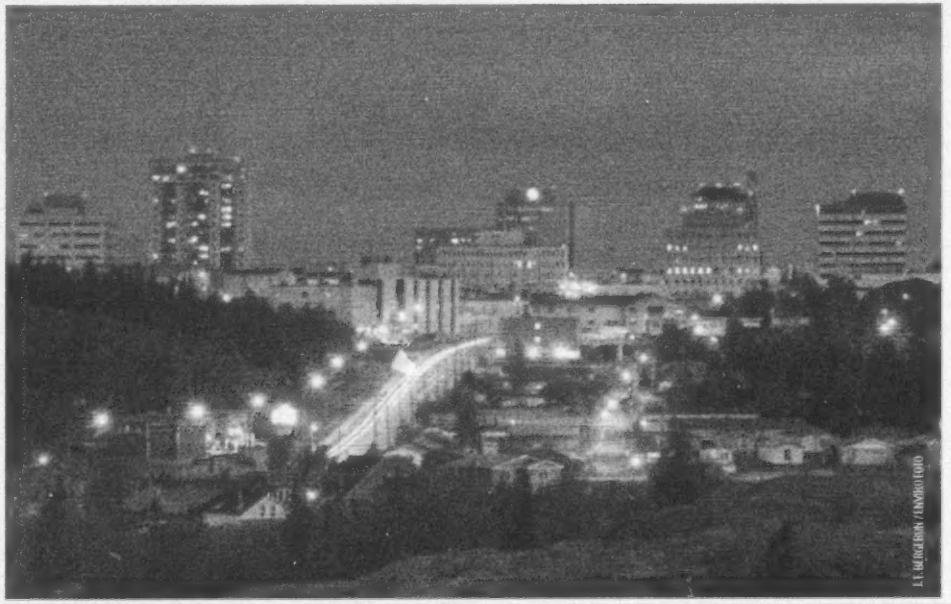
Facilities and Services

Over 80 hotels, motels and bed and breakfast type accommodations are located throughout the NWT. There are plenty of restaurants across the territory providing delicious northern specialties such as moose stew, fresh whitefish, and bannock.

Transportation

The NWT has a network of transportation options to enable visitors to explore the territory:

- Three highways link the NWT to the Yukon, British Columbia and Alberta: the Dempster Highway, Liard Trail and Mackenzie Highway.
- Four major airline carriers offer daily jet service from Edmonton, Alberta to Yellowknife, NWT: Air Canada, Canadian North, First Air and WestJet.
- From Yellowknife, connect with regional or charter airlines to continue to any of the communities.
- The Deh Cho Bridge spans the Mackenzie River and offers year round access to road travellers.
- Free ferries connect roads at river crossings during the months that the rivers are free of ice – from May to November. In winter, ferries are replaced by ice roads.



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Main Purpose of Travel

Aboriginal Tourism

- Traditional ways remain strong in the North amongst all Aboriginal groups willing to share their culture, stories and ways of life.
- Handmade traditional arts and crafts, such as moccasins, mukluks, moose hair tuftings, carvings and beadwork, are available to purchase throughout the territory.
- There are opportunities to experience the stories and traditions of the Aboriginal peoples, including festivals like the Great Northern Arts Festival in Inuvik.
- An Aboriginal Tourism Champions Advisory Council has been formed to advance and develop Aboriginal Tourism.

The Mackenzie River is the longest river system in Canada at 4,241 km in length.

Aurora Borealis

- The NWT is the Aurora Capital of the World – the ideal place to view the spectacular northern lights.
- Visitors can often see the Aurora from late August until mid-April in the NWT. The lights are most dazzling from December to March when nights are longest and the sky is darkest.
- The NWT is located directly below the Aurora oval – the enormous band of energy that circles the North Magnetic Pole. Since the most active rings of activity happen north of the 60th parallel and beyond the Arctic Circle, the clear winter nights offer a 90 to 100% chance of seeing the Aurora.
- The NWT is home to world-class Aurora tour operators and viewing facilities. Visitors who come to view the lights often add on other excursions like dogsledding, snowshoeing and snowmobiling.

National Geographic Traveler has identified Nahanni National Park as one of the must-see places in 2014.

Hunting and Fishing

- Anglers are attracted to the NWT by the prospect of catching Arctic grayling, lake trout, Northern pike, lake whitefish, pickerel, char and other fish species.
- Hundreds of lakes and rivers offer some of the world's most spectacular sport fishing and it's not unusual for anglers to pull trophy size lake trout and Northern pike from NWT waters.
- Anglers can fish all night long under the midnight sun in the summer or ice-fish in winter.
- Spectacular fishing lodges are scattered throughout the NWT.
- Hunting outfitters offer big game packages for Dall's sheep, mountain goats, moose, bears and wolves.
- Free roaming game outnumbers the human population in the NWT.

Touring

- The majority of the general touring visitors come from southern Canada, the United States, Germany and Switzerland.
- From 2011/12 to 2012/13 general touring travel grew by 13 percent.
- In 2012/13 over 15,000 people toured the NWT by road.
- NWT highways allow visitors to experience breathtaking landscapes and wildlife along the route.
- Visitors can enjoy a number of driving routes. Some popular routes include

TERRY PARKER

STEPHANIE PEARL

the Waterfalls Route that includes stops at Alexandra, Lady Evelyn, and Sambaa Deh Falls, amongst others. The Wood Buffalo route is another beautiful roadway that takes drivers to Wood Buffalo National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

- The NWT Road and Campground Guide provides information on the attractions, campgrounds and communities along eight different scenic routes.
- From 2011/12 to 2012/13 general touring travel grew by 13%.

Outdoor Adventure

- Outdoor Adventure describes visitors who travel for the main purpose of participating in outdoor activities, such as hiking, canoeing, kayaking, rafting and dogsledding.
- The NWT offers diverse natural geography, and an extensive system of world-class parks and campgrounds.
- Tour operators offer guided trips by boat, canoe, snowmobile and dogsled.
- A menu of adventure experiences are offered in five national parks: Nahanni, Náàts'ihch'oh, Aulavik, Tuktut Nogait and Wood Buffalo.
- From 2011/12 to 2012/13 outdoor adventure travel grew by 33%.

Business Travel

- Business travel accounts for almost half of tourism spending in the NWT and offers visitors a chance to have a uniquely northern experience.
- More and more business travellers are participating in guided tourism activities during their business trip.
- Canadian business travellers account for the vast majority of the NWT's business travel market.
- The largest number of business travellers work in mining and government.

HANK PRATT / NWT TOURISM

Great Slave Lake is the deepest lake in North America! At 614 metres, it is the sixth deepest lake in the world!

Snapshot of tourists to the NWT

- The majority of Aurora travellers are from Japan, followed by visitors from southern Canada, the United States, South Korea, China, the United Kingdom and Australia.
- Many people travel to the NWT to visit friends and relatives. Almost 90% of these visitors are from Canada, and the majority travel in the summer months. From 2011/12 to 2012/13, these numbers increased by 17%.

- The majority of sport hunters come from across the United States and southern Canada.
- Anglers purchasing guided fishing trips are typically from the United States, Alberta, Ontario and British Columbia. The majority of independent anglers come from Alberta and British Columbia.

TANIA SPENCER

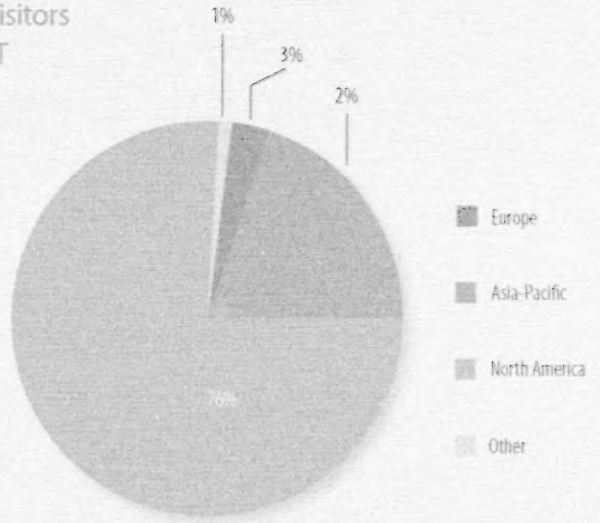
Northwest Territories Visitor Statistics

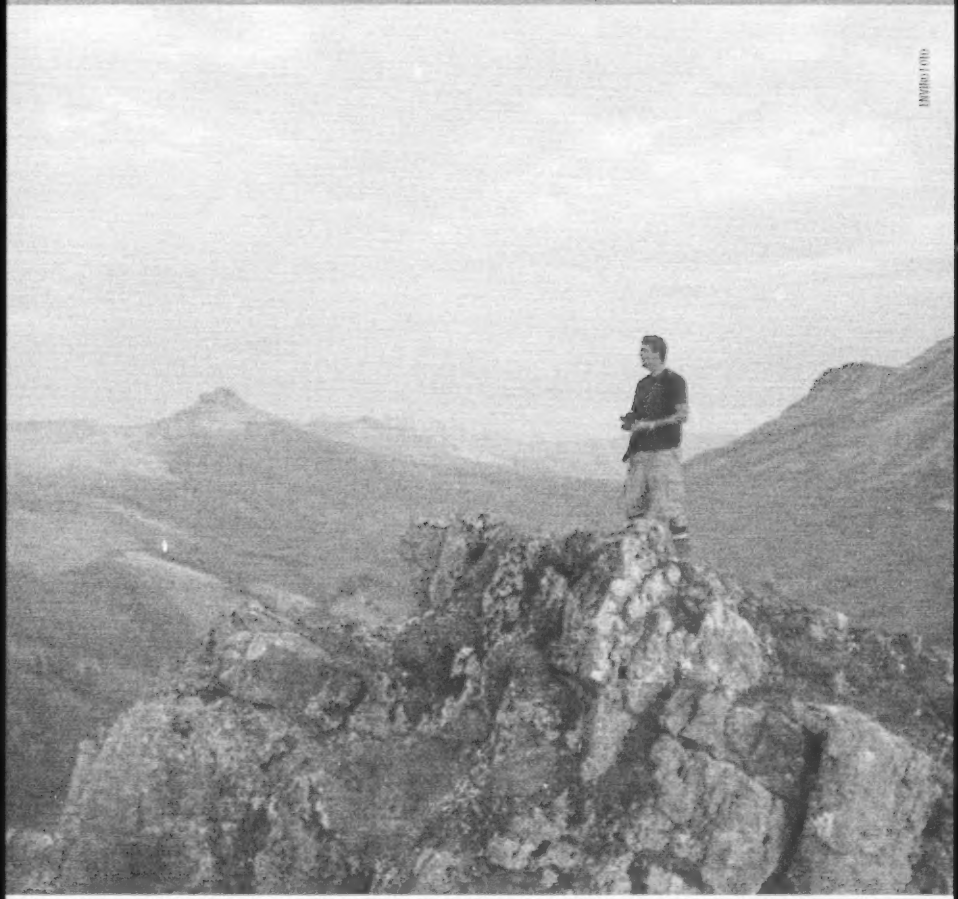
Main Purpose of Travel	2009/10	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12 *	2012/13
Aurora Viewing	5,500	5,400	6,800	7,400	15,700
Fishing	7,300	6,400	5,000	4,700	4,000
General Touring	14,800	14,500	12,900	13,400	15,200
Hunting [1]	940	760	440	480	500*
Outdoor Adventure	2,100	1,900	1,900	2,300	3,100*
Visiting Friends & Relatives	9,300	12,900	13,400	11,800	13,800
Total Leisure Visitors	39,800	41,800	40,400	40,100	52,300*
Business Travel	33,600	26,200	24,800	24,300	24,100
Total Visitors	**73,400**	**68,000**	**65,200**	**64,400**	**76,400***

[1] The number of hunters is rounded to the nearest ten because the totals are less than 1,000

* Indicates revisions

Origin of Visitors to the NWT





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(BOTTOM LEFT) ENVIRO FOTO;
(BOTTOM MIDDLE) RHONDA KENNEDY;
(BOTTOM RIGHT) HANS PFAFF / NWT TOURISM

For general information please contact:

Tourism and Parks
P.O. Box 1320; 8th Floor Scotia Centre
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories X1A 2L9
Telephone: 867.873.7903

For tourism information:

www.spectacularnwt.com
www.fb.com/spectacularnwt
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